

Update on the Efforts by La Sierra University to Address Stipulations

June 2015

Overview of this Report

This report presents progress made by La Sierra University (LSU) to address the stipulations placed upon the institution as a result of Committee on Accreditation (COA) action at its June 2014 meeting.

Recommendations

Based on the information below, staff recommends:

1. That the stipulations from the 2014 accreditation visit be removed.
2. That the accreditation decision be changed from **Accreditation with Stipulations** to **Accreditation**.

Background

A site visit was held at La Sierra University on April 7-9, 2014. The report of that visit was presented to the Committee on Accreditation at its June 27, 2014 meeting (<http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2014-06/2014-06-item-22.pdf>). After discussion and deliberation, the COA determined that the institution be granted **Accreditation with Stipulations**. The three stipulations placed on LSU were based on concerns identified with Common Standards 1 and 2 and Single Subject Program Standard 8. An update on LSU's progress in addressing these stipulations was provided at the February 2015 COA meeting: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov/educator-prep/coa-agendas/2015-02/2015-02-item-18.pdf>.

The three stipulations placed on La Sierra at the June 2014 COA meeting were as follows:

1. That the School of Education at La Sierra University will provide evidence that a unit-wide assessment system has been developed and effectively implemented. The system should include data collection related to unit goals and systematic use of that data for evaluation of candidate performance and unit operations.
2. That the School of Education provides evidence that it has developed a credential recommendation process that ensures that all candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements and that there is a formal system for monitoring the credential recommendation process.
3. That the School of Education provides evidence that the Single Subject credential program provides substantive instruction and supervised practice that effectively prepares each candidate for a single subject credential to plan and deliver content specific instruction.

Information is provided in this Seventh-Year Report summarizing the: a) development and implementation of a unit-wide assessment system to collect data on unit goals and operations and the systematic use of data for evaluation of candidate performance; b) development and implementation of a formal system for monitoring the credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates have met all of the credential requirements; and c) development and implementation of a process that the Single Subject credential program provides substantive instruction and supervised practice that effectively prepares candidates to plan and deliver content specific instruction.

The stipulations and institution response follows.

Stipulation 1 (2014).

That the School of Education at La Sierra University will provide evidence that a unit-wide assessment system has been developed and effectively implemented. The system should include data collection related to unit goals and systematic use of that data for evaluation of candidate performance and unit operations.

2014 Site Visit Team Rationale:

Common Standard 2: Unit and Program Assessment and Evaluation—Not Met

The systematic collection, analysis, and use of data for the unit are still in the initial planning stages. Interviews with unit personnel indicated that the unit recognizes the need for and importance of collecting and analyzing data to inform unit and program decisions, but a unit system has yet to be designed and utilized. While data are being collected in the programs, there is a need for all programs to close the assessment loop and use the data for program enhancement.

Institution Response (2015):

Work continued throughout 2014-2015 to implement the use of LiveText as a unit-wide assessment system. LiveText facilitates unit-wide assessment and comparative analysis.

All on-campus and online candidates in the School of Education are now required to purchase LiveText licenses. All accounts remain active for five years following the date of purchase. Instructors in School of Education courses now require candidates to submit course signature assignments on LiveText, where rubrics for evaluating the signature assignments also appear. These assignments are keyed to university, school and department learning objectives and guided by accreditation in alignment with state and regional accrediting bodies.

In implementing the LiveText requirement, all Common and Program Standards (Administration and Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction, and School Psychology) were identified and entered into the LiveText system. One faculty member participated in four LiveText webinars focused primarily on rubric development.

A number of training workshops on signature assignments and assessments for School of Education faculty and adjunct contract teachers were conducted by the School of Education’s Assessment Coordinator. Adjuncts in the School Psychology and Counseling department were trained one-on-one by the program director. LiveText personnel also met with faculty and conducted workshops. Tables 1 and 2 provide information on those trainings.

Table 1: Training Workshops on Signature Assignments and Assessments

10/22/14	C&I Chair and faculty Chair of Administrative Leadership	3/4/15	School of Education Adjuncts
10/27/14	C&I Adjuncts	4/8/15	C&I Adjuncts
10/29/14	C&I Adjuncts	4/15/15	C&I Adjuncts
1/29/15	School of Education Adjuncts	5/11/15	C&I Adjuncts
2/19/15	School of Education Adjuncts	5/13/15	Administrative Leadership Adjuncts

Table 2: Workshops Conducted by LiveText Personnel

10/30/14	School of Education and LSU Honors program joint workshop on e-portfolios and LiveText Analytics
4/18/15	LiveText Analytics Demonstration for School of Education
6/17/15	LiveText Analytics Demonstration for School of Education, Honors Program, School of Divinity, and university administrators

The School of Education assessment calendar was also reviewed in the School of Education chairs’ meetings and monthly faculty meetings. Examples of scheduled assessment agenda items included the following:

- Review and updating of Strategic Initiatives
- Review of enrollments, analysis of where growth occurred, and planning for continued growth of cohorts
- Review of Live Text data analysis for the 2014-2015 school year, with recommendations made for the September faculty meeting prior to the new school year

LiveText will continue to be used as the instrument for collecting and processing candidate performance data. The School of Education will investigate available additional components offered by LiveText for data analysis. Additionally, the cycle of assessment scheduled on the assessment calendar (see Appendix A) will continue to be followed and adjusted as needed, with attention given to data related to strategic initiatives, admissions, enrollment, budget, advisory feedback, etc.

Stipulation 2 (2014):

That the School of Education provides evidence that it has developed a credential recommendation process that ensures that all candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements and that there is a formal system for monitoring the credential recommendation process.

2014 Site Visit Team Rationale:

Common Standard 1: Educational Leadership—Met With Concerns

The team finds that the education unit does not consistently implement and monitor a credential recommendation process that ensures that candidates recommended for a credential have met all requirements. The practical implementation of credential recommendation is not uniform across the unit; additionally, it was observed that original evidence of verification of requirements or progress toward requirements is maintained in multiple locations within the unit and is only aggregated upon program completion. The team concluded that there is no unit-wide formal and uniform system for monitoring of the credential recommendation process.

Institution Response (2015):

There were minor differences between departments on the credential recommendation process, primarily related to who was tracking the candidate checklists and whether or not the department communicated in writing with the credential analyst regarding candidate completion. The process has now been standardized across the school, as follows:

1. Departmental program coordinators evaluate candidate progress on the credential checklist at two points: pre-practicum, and when the program is complete. Program coordinators communicate with the candidate to address any deficiencies.
2. Once the candidate has completed the program and all requirements have been met, the department sends a letter to the credential analyst, along with the candidate's checklist, verifying completion.
3. The credential analyst evaluates the checklist independently to verify completion.
4. The credential analyst supports and guides the candidate in making application for the credential.
5. The credential analyst reports data annually to the School of Education faculty on the status of credential completions in the School of Education and the functioning of the credential recommendation process.

This process was voted in Chairs' meeting on Oct. 13, 2014 and in the Faculty meeting on Oct. 15, 2014. Implementation began October 15, 2014 and has continued throughout the 2014-2015 academic year. The alignment of the process is complete and the standardized review and recommendation process is ongoing.

Stipulation 3 (2014)

That the School of Education provides evidence that the Single Subject credential program provides substantive instruction and supervised practice that effectively prepares each candidate for a single subject credential to plan and deliver content specific instruction.

2014 Site Visit Team Rationale:

SS Program Standard 8: Pedagogical Preparation for Subject-Specific Content Not Met

The team found that the program does not provide substantive instruction and supervised practice that effectively prepares each candidate for a Single Subject credential to plan and deliver content-specific instruction that is consistent with (a) the state-adopted academic content standards for students and/or curriculum framework in the content area, and (b) the basic principles and primary values of the underlying discipline. The structure of the two single subject methods courses, in which students of all disciplines are present, results in a curriculum that relies too heavily on each candidate's ability to independently research, interpret and apply content-specific pedagogy.

Institution Response (2015):

A customized practicum has been implemented for each candidate. In the fall quarter there were three single subject candidates enrolled in EDCI 429/529 Middle School Theory which consists of ten weeks of instruction concurrent with a twenty hour lab/practicum component. Each candidate was paired with a methods expert mentor who met individually with the candidate to discuss subject specific pedagogy prior to the candidate's lab placement. The Single Subject content areas for the three candidates in Fall 2014 included Math, Science, and History/Social Science. During the practicum for this course, candidates were required to meet with their methods expert mentor at least three times. The methods experts met with their assigned Single Subject candidate and discussed the overview of Standard 8-B, as well as the content area subject specific expectations. Using the program requirements for Standard 8-B, the candidate and the methods expert together developed a plan to ensure that the candidate is prepared to plan and deliver content specific instruction.

Suggestions were solicited from both the methods experts and the candidates about the new process and forms of evidence that could be collected. The Documentation form (Methods Expert Log) was reviewed with the candidate and the methods expert. The process involved completion of a Methods Experts Log to document consultations and demonstrate how mentoring supports Standard 8-B. The *Middle and Secondary Grades Field Experience Handbook* was revised to reflect this newly implemented procedure.

Implementation continued in the Winter quarter with three candidates enrolled in EDCI 430/530 Secondary Theory and Practice. The discipline areas of the candidates at that time were Math, Science, and Language Other than English (LOTE). Subsequently the Standard 8B document was expanded to include the descriptors for the additional subject of LOTE. Since that time, the Standard 8B document has been completed with the addition of evidence and

documentation descriptors for English, Art, Music, Physical Education, and Health Science, LSU's approved Single Subject areas.

The collaboration between the methods expert and the candidate in each methods course (EDCI 429/529 and EDCI 430/530) continues during the time that the candidate observes in a Master Teacher's classroom for 15 hours. After the candidate clarifies with the master teacher the nature of the lesson/s to be presented during the 5 hours of required teaching for each course, the methods expert assists the candidate in determining the appropriate pedagogy for teaching the assignment in the master teacher's classroom.

For each course, the newly-implemented process includes the following:

- Candidates observe single subject pedagogy in the classroom of a Master Teacher credentialed in the single subject content area for a minimum of 15 hours.
- Under the supervision of the single subject credentialed Master Teacher, the candidate teaches lessons for a minimum of 5 hours.
- The methods expert mentor continues to support the candidate during the practicum placement.

Methods experts mentors are carefully screened by the C&I faculty to ensure that they are experts in their respective discipline, and that they have pedagogical expertise in the single subject content. Master teacher selections involve the same screening but have the further requirement of being credentialed in the single subject with three years successful teaching experience. Occasionally, the role of methods expert and master teacher may be filled by the same individual, if that person meets the requirements of both roles.

Each quarter, candidates receive personalized placements with methods experts mentor and master teachers, and are assigned a university supervisor who has expertise in pedagogy. La Sierra University began implementation of the aforementioned process during the 2014 fall quarter, continued it during the 2015 winter quarter, and has completed the process with the inclusion of descriptors for all single subject areas in which it is authorized to issue a credential. A methods expert for each of the credential content areas was identified. The methods experts mentor, the master teachers, and the candidates are trained by C&I faculty regarding the pedagogical expectations and documentation needed for meeting the requirements of Standard 8-B. As candidates enroll in different content areas, each of the content-specific areas is now set with documentation of the activities that are directly tied to each standard.

Altogether, each Single Subject candidate receives 226 hours of individual support prior to student teaching as demonstrated in the table that follows:

Table 3. Single Subject Pedagogy Support

Course	Class	Observation	Mentoring	Teaching
EDCI 429/529 Middle School Theory and Practice	90	15	3	5
EDCI 430/530 Secondary Theory and Practice	90	15	3	5
Total Hours of Support (226)	180	30	6	10

Activities and documentation will be reviewed on a regular basis with particular attention given to the input from the methods experts and the master teachers.

This process will be shared with the Community Advisory Committee that meets during the winter quarter. Now equipped with a list of identified methods experts for all of the content areas, LSU will continue to build upon that list to find the best qualified experts to mentor teacher candidates.

Next Steps

Based on the documentation provided, Commission staff and the team lead recommend that the Committee on Accreditation remove the three stipulations, and change the accreditation status of La Sierra University from Accreditation with Stipulations to **Accreditation**.

Appendix A

Assessment Calendar

Month	Assessment	Frequency	Review Group	Common Standard
September	Exit Interview Feedback by Department	Annual	Faculty	4,6,7
	Faculty Research Summary from faculty reports	Annual	Faculty	
October	Assessment Committee Feedback	Annual	Chairs	2
November	Strategic Initiatives	Biennial	Faculty	1
	Enrollment data by program	Annual	Faculty	
December	Budget review	Annual	Chairs	3
	Analysis of Institutional Support	Annual	Chairs	3
January	Review of syllabi relevant to NAD certification	Triennial	EDCI, Health, and Divinity School Faculty	
February	Alumni Survey	Triennial	Faculty	4, 6, 7
March	Admissions data (also reviewed by Graduate Council)	Annual	Faculty	5
April	Common Standards Review	Biennial	Faculty	
	NAD Certification Placement Review	Triennial	EDCI faculty, Dean	
May	Test Scores Summary Review (CSET, RICA, etc.)	Annual	Chairs	2, 9
June	Advisory Board feedback	Annual	Faculty	7, 8
Summer	Candidate Competence Assessment Review	Annual	Chairs	9
	Candidate evaluation of supervisors/mentors/advisors	Annual	Chairs	4, 6, 7, 8
	Class evaluation summary of previous year	Annual	Chairs	4